

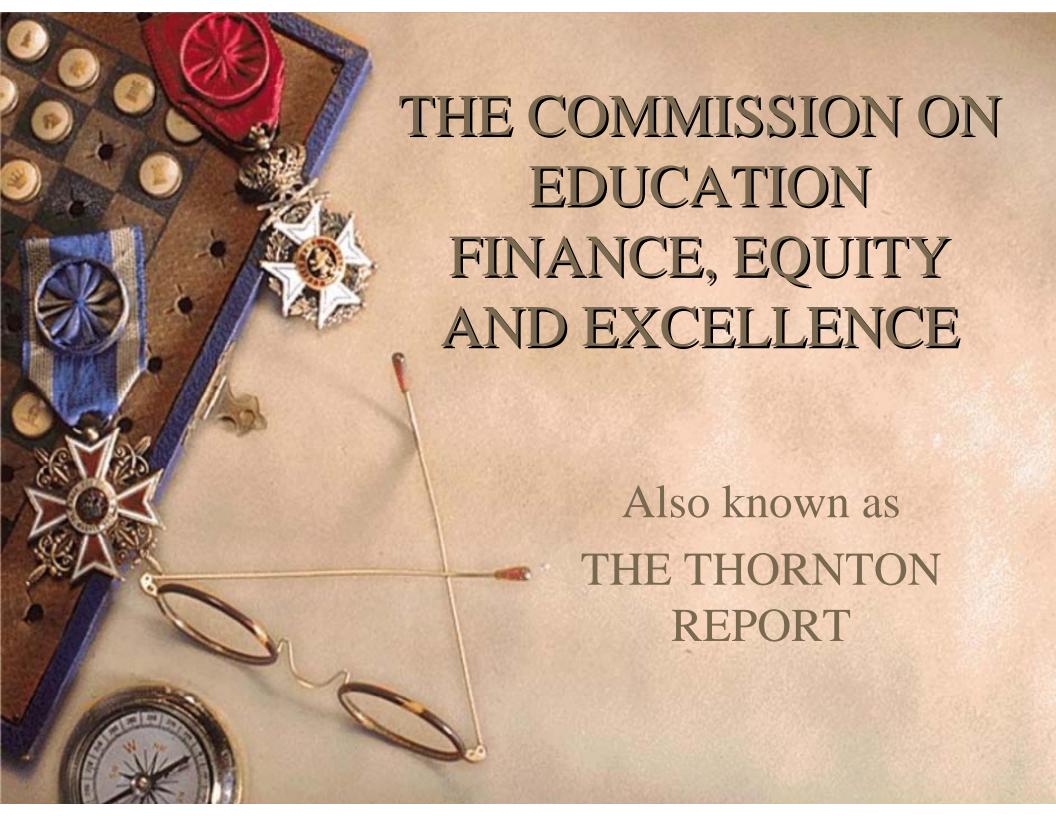
Washington State Education Association (WEA) Education and the Learning First Alliance Finance Summit St. Martin's College

"Leave No Child Behind: Student Performance Expectations and Funding Equity and Adequacy"

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Equity, Adequacy and Excellence

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Bridge to Excellence in Historical Context: Standards Without Standards, Funding Equity and Adequacy

- Maryland's 1870 Constitution and Article VIII, Section 2, the Education Article
- Eleven Prior Commissions Designed to Implement the Education Article
- The Brown vs. Board of Education Desegregation Phase (Taney Option)
- Somerset vs. Hornbeck and Baltimore City Litigation



Commission Organization and Operating Procedures

- Appointment by the Governor and General Assembly
- The 27 Member Commission
- The Commission's Consultants
 (Augenblick and Myers) and the Maryland
 Education Coalition (Management
 Analysis and Planning Consultant)
- Regional and State-wide hearings



What was the Purpose of Commission on Education Finance, Equity and Excellence?

- Every ten years Maryland forms a commission and charges with the task of:
 - studying and evaluating the State's funding of public schools
 - studying and evaluating State's accountability measures
- Information captured during this study/evaluation period is compiled into a report and submitted to the Governor.
- This report not only includes the Commission's findings, but recommendations for enhancement, improvements, etc.
- The recommendations outlined in the Commission's report generally become the framework for education legislation enacted by the Maryland General Assembly.



Education Funding Equity in Maryland

- Currently Maryland does not adequately fund its local schools systems to meet its nationally ranked performance standards.
- The percentage of school funding by government body is approximately 41% State, 54% Local and 5% Federal.
 - this means local jurisdictions of greater wealth will have access to the better schools.
 - it also means that local jurisdictions with a greater population of individuals classified as economically disadvantaged (living at poverty level) will continue to see their schools and all efforts for reform fail.
- Article VIII of the Maryland State Constitution requires the State government to ensure adequate funding and maintenance of public schools through a system of taxation.



The Six Elements of the Thornton Commission's Charge

- Ensure adequate funding for students in public schools;
- Ensure equity in funding for students in public schools;
- Ensure excellence in school systems and student performance;
- Provide a smooth transition from current funding programs (sunset after FY-2002);
- Evaluate the use of grants or the base formula to fund local education; and
- Evaluate the effects of local property taxes on the equitable allocation of funding for students in public schools.



Three Goals Behind Education Adequacy Studies

Establish performance standards for students, schools and school systems

Ensure that schools and school systems have adequate funding necessary to meet the state's performance standards

Hold schools and school systems accountable for making progress toward and ultimately meeting the State's performance standards



THE HEART OF THE COMMISSION'S MESSAGE

ADEQUATE FUNDING

 Ensure all school systems receive funding needed to meet Maryland Performance Standards (Maryland School Assessment and High School Assessment).

• EQUITABLE FUNDING

 Ensure funding programs no longer disburse funds based on the wealth of a jurisdiction, but rather on the needs of the students in a jurisdiction.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Change the current funding system
 - Consolidation
 - Combine some of the 50 funding programs used to disburse education funds.
 - Base Cost
 - Raise the per pupil base cost (approximately \$2,000)
 - Students with Special Needs
 - Add an calculated pupil weight for students with special needs (poverty, LEP, disability). This is in additional to the per pupil base cost.
 - Government Funding
 - Increase the State's funding from 41% or 47%



Wealth Equalization and Cost of Education Index

- Wealth Equalization

• Distribution of funds can longer be based on the wealth of a jurisdiction. There would be three exceptions to this "wealth equalization recommendation – funding for the retirement fund, funding students with limited English proficiency and the 16 existing funding programs recommended to continue as presently designed. This exception is currently a point of contention.

Develop a Education Index

- The State would identify all cost of education among local jurisdictions that are due to factors outside the control of the local jurisdiction.
- These factors would be used to adjust funding based on the factors identified.



Tax Base, Transportation, Early Childhood Education and Gifted and Talented Students

Guaranteed Tax Base

- Would reward the education funding efforts of jurisdictions with below to average wealth.
- This reward would be additional State aid.
- The reward would be based on the jurisdiction's supplemental funding efforts.

Transportation

• Increase the per student transportation cost for students with special needs from \$500 to \$1000.

Early Child Education

• Include funding for Full-day Kindergarten for all students.

Gifted and Talented Students

• Provide additional funding for Gifted & Talented Student programs.



Adequate Revenue Sources Must be Identified to Fund High Student Performance Expectations

- Revenue Resources

- The General Assembly and Governor must re-prioritize existing funding in the State budget to fully fund the Thornton Commission's recommendations. Initial funding started in fiscal year 2003.
- Find additional revenue sources to meet the State constitutional obligation for the funding and maintenance of public schools.
- State funding for schools must increase by an additional \$1.3 billion by 2007 approximately \$300 million more than the State expects to appropriate for education funding during that time.



Guiding Principles of the Bridge to Excellence Education Funding Paradigm

- Adequacy: a direct link between what is expected of school systems and the level of funding that school system receives
- Equity: educational opportunities should not depend on a jurisdiction's ability to raise revenue from local resources
- Simplicity: The majority of State education aid should be funneled through four State aid formula (the foundation program and one aid formula for each of the three special needs populations)
- Flexibility: Most State aid should be distributed in the form of flexible block grants. Accountability should come through annual master plan reports and consequences for non-performance



What Are Citizens Doing to Support High Education Standards and Performance and Education Finance Equity and Adequacy in Maryland

- Writing their State Senator and Delegates urging them to support full funding for Bridge to Excellence ("Thornton") and adequate and equitable education funding with standards and accountability.
- Lobbying the Governor urging him to support the recommendations for adequate and equitable education funding.
- Reminding the State of its obligation under Article VIII of the Maryland State Constitution to adequately fund and maintain public schools.
- Educating the community, especially the business community, about Bridge to Excellence



Securing Citizens Involvement

- Make a commitment that as Maryland residents you will:
 - not allow distractions to keep you from focusing on the true funding issues that relate to the success of schools and children.
 - learn about public and private decision-makers who make decisions about education funding; but, in many instances have no direct ties with public education.
 - Share the message of the Thornton Report with friends, families and encourage them to support it.
 - Work with the education organizations in their efforts to prepare a united message before the Governor and General Assembly.



Countdown to Educational



Justice

"Ensuring Funding Equity and Adequacy for all of Maryland's Children"